

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-11(Cancelled).

12(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket for an internal combustion engine, insertable for the sealing of components having at least one T-junction, said gasket having at least one functional layer, at least one distance layer, and at least one seal element provided in the region of the T-junction wherein the distance layer has at least one recessed region extending into one side of said distance layer less than completely through said distance layer to a seal engaging bottom surface, said recessed region having a boundary region extending from said one side of said distance layer to said seal engaging bottom surface with a boundary region extending upwardly from said bottom surface and completely surrounding said bottom surface, said recessed region receiving a portion of said seal element in engagement with said seal engaging bottom surface, said portion of said seal element being spaced from at least a portion of said boundary region to provide a void space between said seal element and said boundary region.

13(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket of claim 12 wherein the seal element protrudes outwardly from the recessed region in the direction of at least one of the sealed components and is detached from said at least one functional layer.

14(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket of claim 12 wherein the distance layer abuts said at least one functional layer, said at least one functional layer has an opening at least partially above said recessed ~~region~~portion sized to receive said seal element therethrough in detached fashion.

15(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 14, wherein the seal engaging bottom surface of said recessed region has a larger surface in cross-section than a distance across said opening.

16(Previously Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 15, wherein at least a part of said opening is provided above the recessed region and is essentially parallel thereto.

17(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the recessed region is generally oval in form.

18(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element is partially supported on ~~[[a]]~~ said one side ~~boundary region~~ of the distance layer surrounding the recessed region.

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19(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element is arranged in the recessed region without contacting the entire boundary region boundaries of the recessed region and is supported by said bottom surface of the recessed region.

20(Canceled).

21(Currently Amended). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 14, wherein at least one hollow channel is formed in said functional layer is in open communication with the opening, said hollow channel extending outwardly from said opening in open communication said opening and said seal element [[is]] being partially received in said channel.

22(Previously Presented). A cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein the seal element comprises at least one silicone worm introduced in the recessed region.

23(New). The cylinder head gasket according to claim 14, wherein said opening in said functional layer is at least partially spaced from said seal element.

24(New). The cylinder head gasket according to claim 12, wherein said seal engaging bottom surface is planar.

25(New). A cylinder head gasket for an internal combustion engine, insertable for the sealing of components having at least one T-junction, said gasket having at least one functional layer, at least one distance layer, and at least one seal element provided in the region of the T-junction wherein the distance layer has at least one recessed region extending into one side of said distance layer less than completely through said distance layer to a seal engaging bottom surface, said recessed region having a boundary region extending from said one side of said distance layer to said seal engaging bottom surface, said at least one functional layer abutting said one side of said distance layer and having an opening at least partially above said recessed region, said recessed region receiving a portion of said seal element in engagement with said seal engaging bottom surface and said seal element extending through said opening in said functional layer.

26(New). The cylindrical head gasket according to claim 25, wherein said seal element is spaced from at least a portion of said boundary region generally beneath said opening in said functional layer to provide a void space between said seal element and said boundary region.